

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Siam

DATE DISTR. 15 Mar 1949

SUBJECT Factions Involved in Political Maneuverings
in Connection with the Draft Constitution
and the Amnesty Bill

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1. Opposition to the recently passed draft constitution came from two quarters; a minor section of the November 1947 Coup group, and the northeasterners, headed by Nai Liang Chayakan and Nai Fong Sitthitham of Ubon. The opposition of the former failed to gain impetus because of Pibul's order not to hold any further meetings of the Coup group*, and because Luang Kach was occupied in attempting to arrange the diversion of his trial to the Criminal Court, where an easy acquittal awaits him. The activities of members of this group did, however, progress far enough to project political feelers. The latest of these is a suggestion for the formation of a coalition government, headed by Chao Phya Srithamathibet as Premier, Luang Pibul as Minister of Defense, with the remaining ministries to be filled by a majority of Democrats. The northeasterners directed most of their criticism against the Royalists, and joined part of the Coup group in opposing the sending of Chao Phya Srithamathibet to Lausanne to get the King's signature on the constitution. This joint effort failed.
2. The Amnesty Act**, which was sponsored by M.C. Nittiyakorn and rejected, was drafted by Nai Chamlong Daoruang and Nai Thawin Udon. The latter two prevailed upon Nai Liang Chayakan to let M.C. Nittiyakorn introduce the bill. Nai Liang agreed in the face of the imposing list of military officers involved in the plot.
3. The northeasterners' dinner party*** was fundamentally meant to rally support from the northeastern Members of Parliament for the Amnesty Bill, but the attempt met with complete failure.

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** Comment. In connection with the 1 October 1948 abortive
countercoup.

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Comment. Presumably a reference to a meeting of north-
eastern Members of Parliament called by Nai Liang in late January
1949.

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